

Message Text

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UNCLAS MONTREAL 297

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CA OVIP (TRUDEAU, PIERRE)

SUBJ: MONTREAL MEDIA COVERAGE TRUDEAU SPEECH TO CONGRESS

1. MONTREAL PRESS AFFORDED HEAVY PLAY INCLUDING FULL TEXT AND WAS GENERALLY QUITE LAUDATORY ON TRUDEAU SPEECH TO CONGRESS.

2. MOST THOUGHTFUL EDITORIAL SIGNED BY CLAUDE RYAN IN LE DEVOIR. PUBLISHER RYAN FOUND SPEECH REASSURING TO U.S. POLITICIANS AND ENHANCING TRUDEAU IMAGE IN U.S. RYAN CONCLUDED THAT TRUDEAU REPRESENTED CANADA WITH DISTINCTION AND THAT HIS VISIT CONTRIBUTED GREATLY TO IMPROVE U.S./CANADA RELATIONS--A COMMENT REPEATED IN OTHER PAPERS.

3. HOWEVER, RYAN ALSO SOMEWHAT CRITICAL OF TRUDEAU SPEECH FROM CANADIAN AUDIENCE VIEWPOINT, ASSERTING NOTHING NEW WAS SAID NOR WAS THE PRIME MINISTER MORE PRECISE THAN IN THE PAST. THIS ALSO REPEATED IN LA PRESSE, MONTREAL STAR.

4. FINALLY, RYAN DECLARED TRUDEAU BROUGHT THE PARTI QUEBECOIS POSITION DOWN TO A "LIMITED, NARROW AND NEGATIVE CONCEPT: SEPARATISM." RYAN FOUND THIS A "SIMPLISTIC AND NEGATIVE WAY OF SUMMARIZING HIS OPPONENTS' POSITION" AND THAT IT "WAS NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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VERY COURTEOUS AND NOT VERY HONEST."

5. LA PRESSE'S MARCEL PEPIN, WRITING FROM WASHINGTON, THOUGHT TRUDEAU SATISFIED THE AMERICANS, REASSURED THE ENGLISH CANADIANS, AND STRENGTHENED CONVICTIONS OF QUEBECOIS WHO CHALLENGED THE FEDERAL SYSTEM. THE LATTER HEARD THE PRIME MINISTER ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR LONG-STANDING GRIEVANCES UNDER THE PRESENT CONFEDERATION.

PEPIN INTERPRETED THE TRUDEAU SPEECH AS SUGGESTING COMPROMISE AND ACCOMODATION.

6. LA PRESSE EDITORIAL BY MARCEL ADAM, IN COMPARING TRUDEAU SPEECH TO EARLIER SPEECH BY PREMIER LEVESQUE IN NEW YORK, FOUND TRUDEAU SPEECH BETTER BALANCED, BETTER ADAPTED TO AUDIENCE, AND MORE JUDICIOUS IN ITS REFERENCES TO AMERICAN HISTORY. ADAM ASSERTED THAT APPLAUSE FOLLOWING TRUDEAU'S PROFESSION OF FEDERALIST FAITH SHOWED THAT AMERICANS ARE MUCH LESS INDIFFERENT TO SURVIVAL OF CONFEDERATION THAN ONE MIGHT HAVE BELIEVED. HE ALSO FOUND ANOTHER ELOQUENT INDICATION OF AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN CONFEDERATION IN PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT TO CTV THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD PREFER CONFEDERATION. ADAM CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT SPEECH SHOULD GREATLY ENHANCE IMAGE OF TRUDEAU IN U.S. AND CONSIDERABLY RESTORE HIS POLITICAL CREDIT IN CANADA.

7. THE MONTREAL STAR, WHILE ASSERTING TRUDEAU SAID NOTHING CANADIANS HAD NOT HEARD BEFORE, ADDED SPEECH "SHOULD HELP DISPEL ANY ILLUSION THAT THE BREAKUP OF THE COUNTRY IS EITHER IMMINENT OR INEVITABLE." FURTHERMORE, ACCORDING TO STAR EDITORIAL, TRUDEAU SPEECH SHOULD INFORM CANADIANS THAT NATIONAL UNITY IS AN INTERNATIONAL AS WELL AS DOMESTIC ISSUE, CONCERNING WORLD ORDER, INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENTS, MILITARY ALLIANCES, AID PROGRAMS. "IF THE NOTION OF CANADA'S INEVITABLE BREAKUP COMES TO BE ACCEPTED ABROAD, THEN THE COUNTRY'S POSITION IN THE WORLD CAN BE SERIOUSLY DAMAGED."

8. ALL PAPERS CARRY DETAILS FOLLOWUP BRIEFING BY U.S. AND CANADIAN SPOKESMEN.

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